

# Principles- Focused Evaluation

The GUIDE



Michael Quinn Patton

# Skyggen

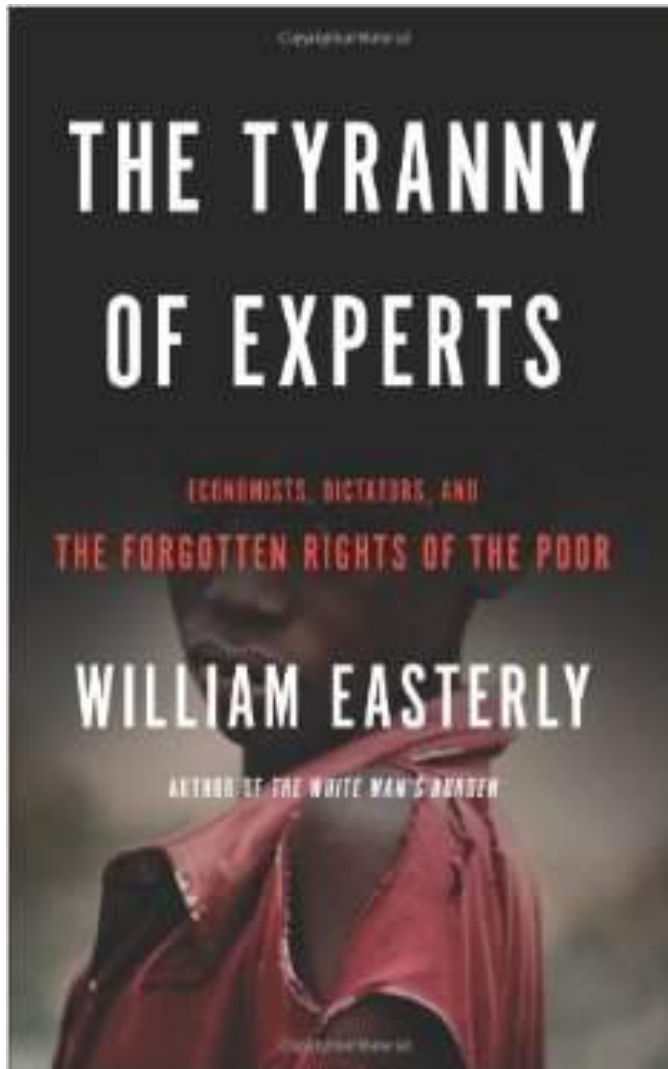






# Evaluation's Haunting Shadows





“It is critical to get the principles of action right before acting.”

# Baseline

Identify a principle that informs and guides your life choices and decisions. Any kind of choice. Work. Family. Money. Relationships. Faith. Any principle.

*Write it down.*

That's your baseline, your starting point, *your first principle*. See if it changes, or your approach to following it changes, as we work on principles-focused evaluation today.

# The Project/Model Mentality

Planners

Funders

Implementers

Evaluators

# Evaluation – Measuring Goal Attainment

## **EVALUABILITY ASSESSMENT**



# Political Context



# Tradition Evaluation

## Evaluating...

- Projects & Programs
- Clusters of projects
- Goal attainment
- Outcomes
- Implementation

## **Generating...**

- Findings
- Lessons
- Recommendations

# Nontraditional & New Directions:

## Evaluating...

- Mission fulfillment
- Strategy
- Advocacy campaigns
- Policy change
- Systems Change
- Complex dynamic interventions

# Innovations & Challenges:

## *Evaluating...*

- Community impacts
- Regional initiatives
- Environmental ecosystem sustainability
- Networks and collaborations
- Leadership
- Innovation
- Collective impact
- Scaling
- **EFFECTIVENESS PRINCIPLES**

# Effectiveness Principles

An effectiveness principle is a statement that provides guidance about how to think or behave toward some desired result (either explicit or implicit) based on norms, values, beliefs, experience, and knowledge.

The statement is a hypothesis until evaluated within some context to determine its relative meaningfulness, truth, feasibility, and utility for those attempting to follow it.



# Principles- Focused Evaluation

The GUIDE



Michael Quinn Patton

# Inusuk



# Principles work

- Crafting principles
- Evaluating principles



You mustn't compromise your principles, but you mustn't humiliate the opposition. No one is more dangerous than one who is humiliated.

— *Nelson Mandela* —

**AZ** QUOTES



# Mandela-Tutu

## Principles of Truth & Reconciliation

1. Bring together the oppressor and the oppressed
2. Speak the truth to each other
3. Confession
4. Forgiveness
5. Reconciliation



“The arc of the moral universe is long,  
but it bends towards justice.”

**NONVIOLENCE**

# *SYSTEMS THINKING and COMPLEXITY THEORY*

## *Getting to Maybe*



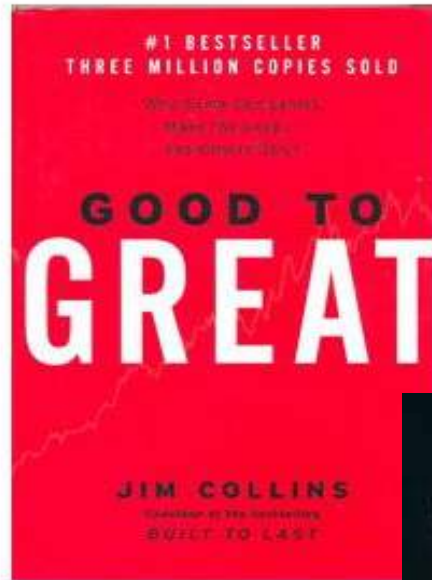
THIS BOOK IS FOR THOSE WHO ARE NOT HAPPY WITH THE WAY THINGS ARE AND WOULD LIKE TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE. THIS BOOK IS FOR ORDINARY PEOPLE WHO WANT TO MAKE CONNECTIONS THAT WILL CREATE EXTRAORDINARY OUTCOMES. THIS IS A BOOK ABOUT MAKING THE IMPOSSIBLE HAPPEN. GETTING TO MAYBE: HOW TO CHANGE THE WORLD.

Transformative  
social  
movements were  
***problem-focused  
and principles-  
driven***

# The Niche of Principles-Focused Evaluation

- Unit of analysis/evaluation focus:  
*the evaluand*
- Approach to programming
- Way to navigate complex dynamic systems
- Approach to evaluation
- Way of doing business



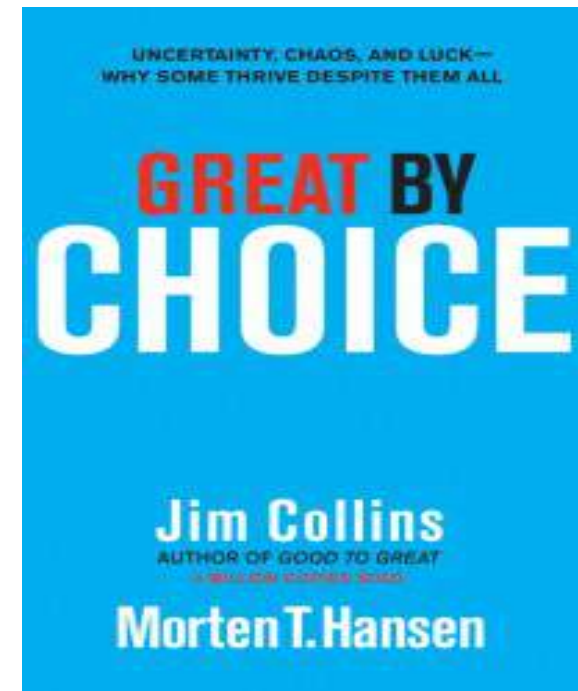


2001

## *PRINCIPLES*



2012



# PRINCIPLES

## RAY DALIO

"Ray Dalio has provided me with invaluable guidance and insights that are now available to you in *Principles*."

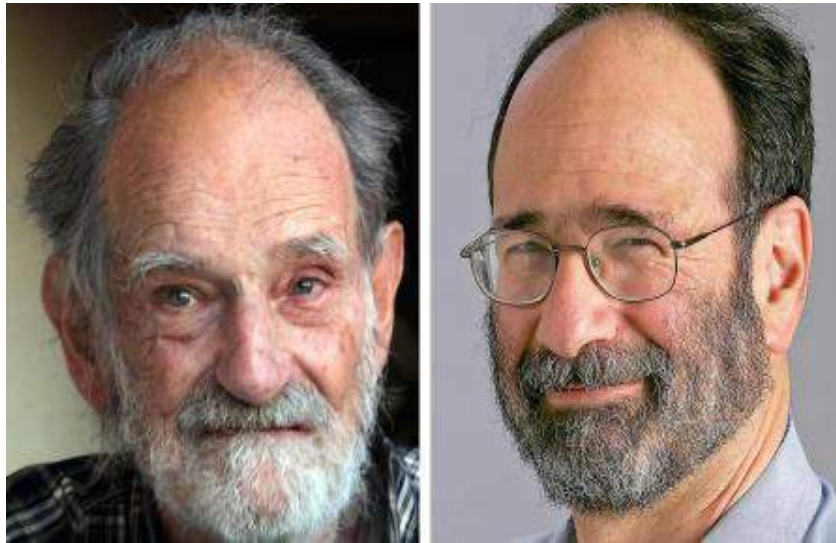
—BILL GATES

"I found it to be truly extraordinary. Every page is full of so many principles of distinction and insights—and I love how Ray incorporates his history and his life in such an elegant way."

—TONY ROBBINS

**#1 NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLER**

# Roth and Shapley Won the 2012 Nobel Economics Prize for **Matching Theory**



# Match-making

How to pair doctors with hospitals,  
students with schools,  
kidneys with transplant recipients and  
even men and women in marriage.

**Key evaluation challenge:**

**Matching the evaluation approach  
to the evaluation situation**



## **Challenges:**

**Situation  
Recognition  
and  
Appropriate  
Evaluation  
Designs**

# Principles-focused evaluation questions

1. To what extent and in what ways is the principle meaningful to those to whom it is meant to provide guidance?
2. To what extent is the principle adhered to?
3. If adhered to, to what extent and in what ways does it lead toward desired results?

# Rules of Engagement

VS

# Principles of Engagement

# DRIVING

RULE:



PRINCIPLE

DEFENSIVE  
DRIVING

# RECIPES vs PRINCIPLES

## REPLICATION RECIPE

Add 1/4 teaspoon of salt



## ADAPTIVE PRINCIPLE

**Season to taste & situation**



# Exercise

## Rule:

30 minutes of  
aerobic exercise  
each day

## Principle:

Exercise regularly  
at a level that  
supports health  
and is sustainable  
given your  
health, life style,  
age, and capacity.



# EVALUATION

## **Rule (Contract obligation)**

Deliver the report on time: the date specified in the contract.

## **U-FE Principle**

Target deliver of findings to be timely and useful for informing decisions and learning opportunities.

Monitor situational developments that may affect timeliness.

# American Academy Of Pediatrics Lifts 'No Screens Under 2' Rule





## **Moving to a World Beyond “ $p < 0.05$ ”**

[Ronald L. Wasserstein](#), [Allen L. Schirm](#) &  
[Nicole A. Lazar](#)

Pages 1-19 | Published online: 20 Mar 2019

# Four statistical analysis principles

- Accept uncertainty
- Be thoughtful
- Be open
- Be modest

# Evaluating...

## **RULES**

Compliance

## **PRINCIPLES**

1. Meaningfulness  
& relevance
2. Adherence
3. Results

# GUIDE

## For Effectiveness Principles



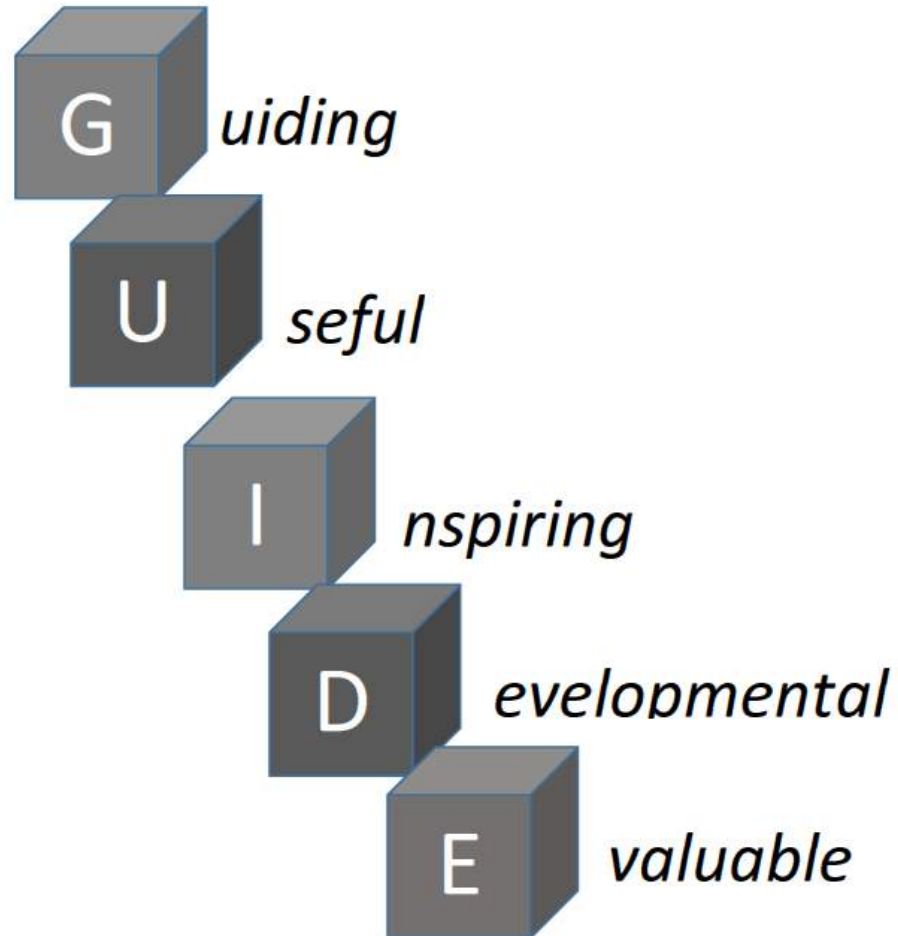
# SMART Goals



**Note:** R is sometimes *Relevant* rather than Realistic; T is sometimes *Time-bound*, not Timely.

# GUIDE Framework

GUIDE Framework for Effectiveness Principles



## Guiding

- Prescriptive -- provides advice and guidance
- Directional -- specifies direction and informs priorities
- Effectiveness-oriented (active verb wording) -- "Do this..." to be effective
- Distinctive from its opposite or alternative

## Useful

- Points toward desired results
- Describes how to be effective
- Supports making choices and decisions
- Utility resides in being interpretable, doable, feasible and actionable

## Inspiring

- Values-based, ethically grounded
- Meaningful
- Is important, evokes a sense of purpose

## Developmental

- Context sensitive
- Complexity adaptable
- Enduring (not time-bound)

## Evaluatable

- Can document & judge whether it is followed
- Can document & judge what results
- Can determine if it takes you where you want

# Evaluation Criteria

1. Meaningfulness
2. Adherence
3. Results

# Review your principle

1

Take another look at your baseline principle.

2

Examine it using the GUIDE criteria.

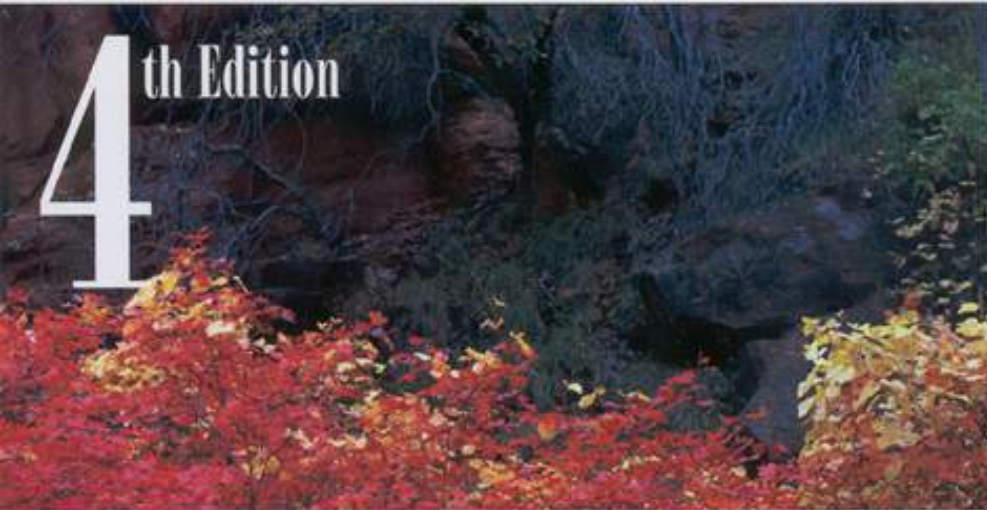
3

Revise accordingly.



# Utilization- Focused Evaluation

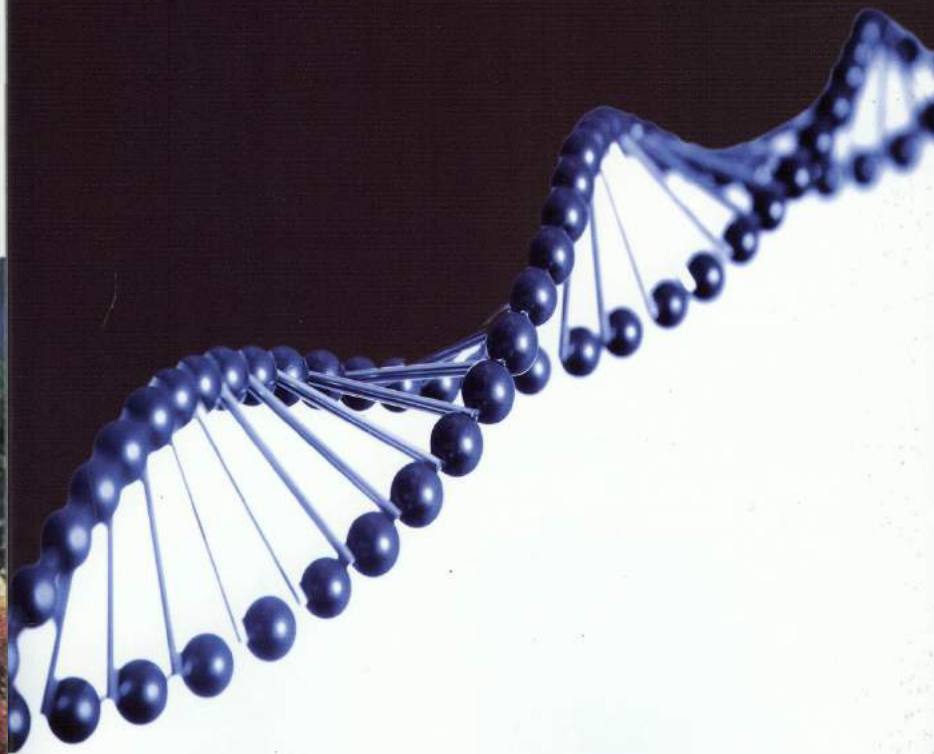
4<sup>th</sup> Edition



Michael Quinn Patton



## ESSENTIALS *of* UTILIZATION-FOCUSED EVALUATION



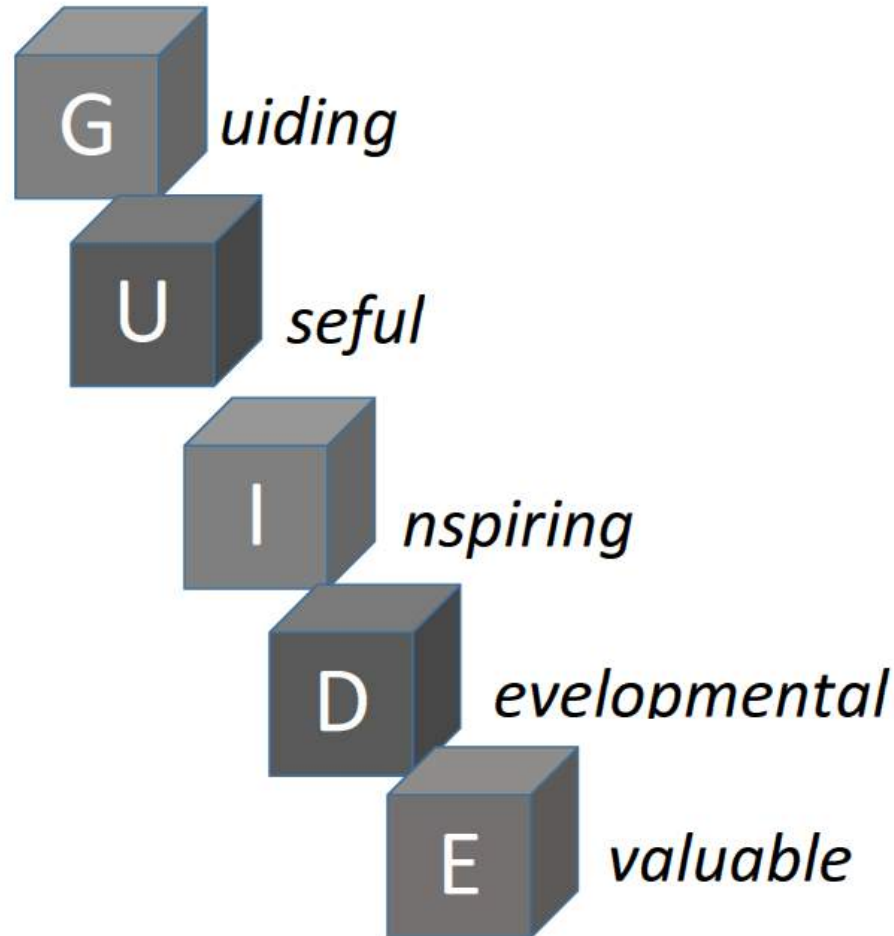
MICHAEL QUINN PATTON





# GUIDE Framework applied to U-FE

GUIDE Framework for Effectiveness Principles

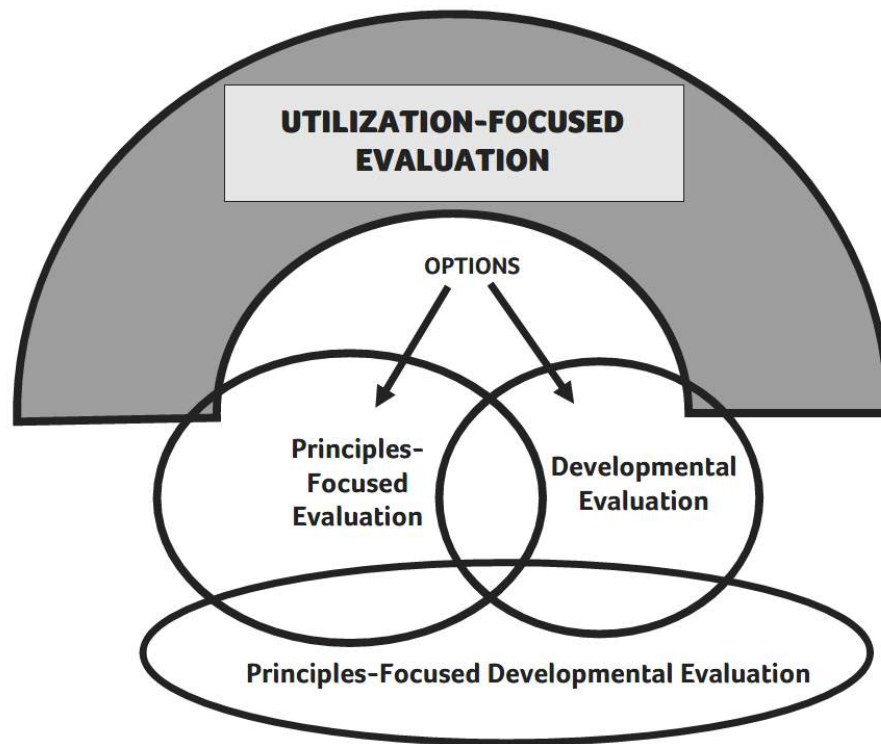


# U-FE Principle

Focus on Intended Use  
by  
Intended Users

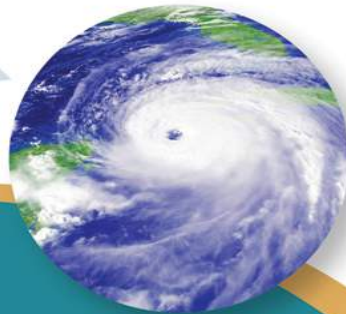
*Utilization-focused evaluation principle:*  
Focus on intended use, by and with  
intended users, in every aspect of, and at  
every stage of, an evaluation.

**EXHIBIT 5.6. Relationships among Utilization-Focused Evaluation, Developmental Evaluation, and Principles-Focused Evaluation**



# Developmental Evaluation

Applying  
Complexity Concepts  
to Enhance  
Innovation  
and Use



*Michael Quinn Patton*

# Original Primary Options

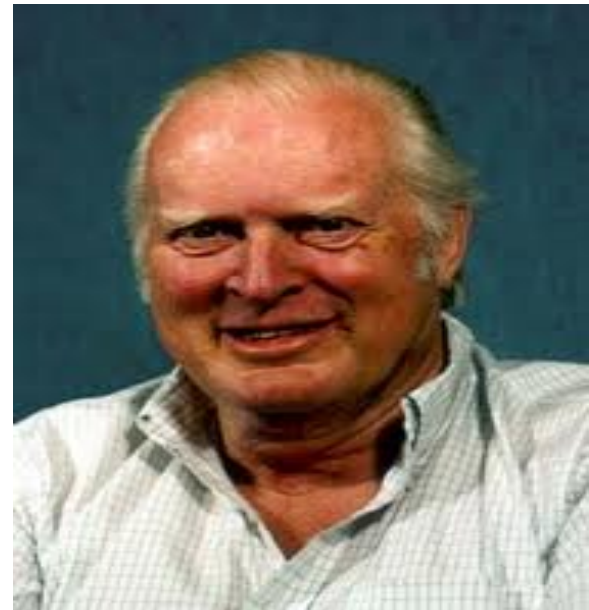
## **Formative and Summative Evaluation**

(Mid-term and End-of-Project Reviews)

Michael Scriven(1967).

“The methodology of evaluation.”

Pp. 39-83 in Ralph W. Tyler et al. (eds.) *Perspectives of Curriculum Evaluation*. AERA Monograph Series on Curriculum Evaluation, 1. Chicago: Rand McNally





# Blandin Community Leadership Program





## Three PURPOSES

- ❖ Guide ongoing adaptation
- ❖ Adapting to new contexts (scaling principles)
- ❖ Systems change and transformation

# Purposes

## Purpose

**1** Ongoing development

## Challenge

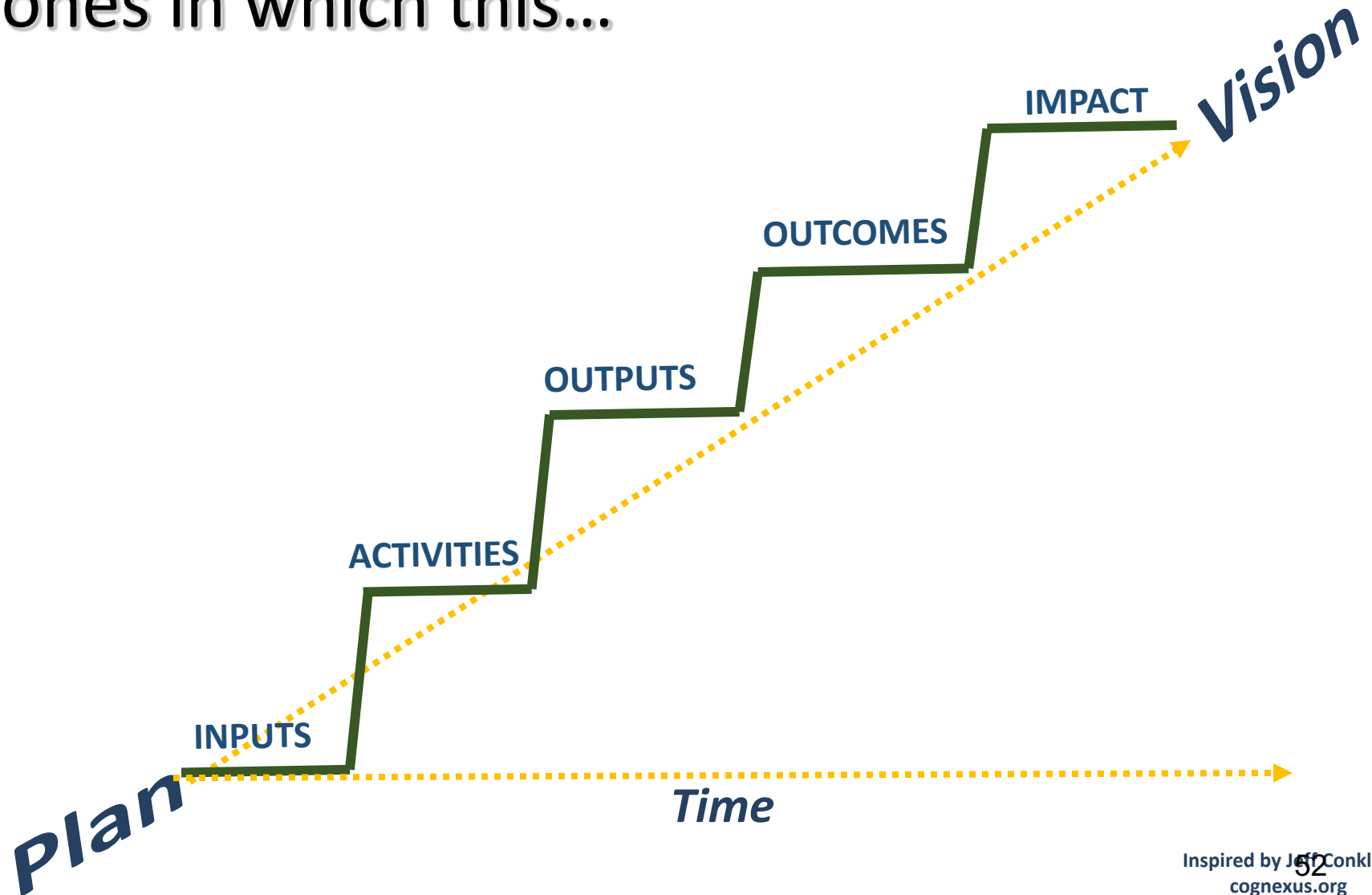
Implemented in complex & dynamic environment

## Implications

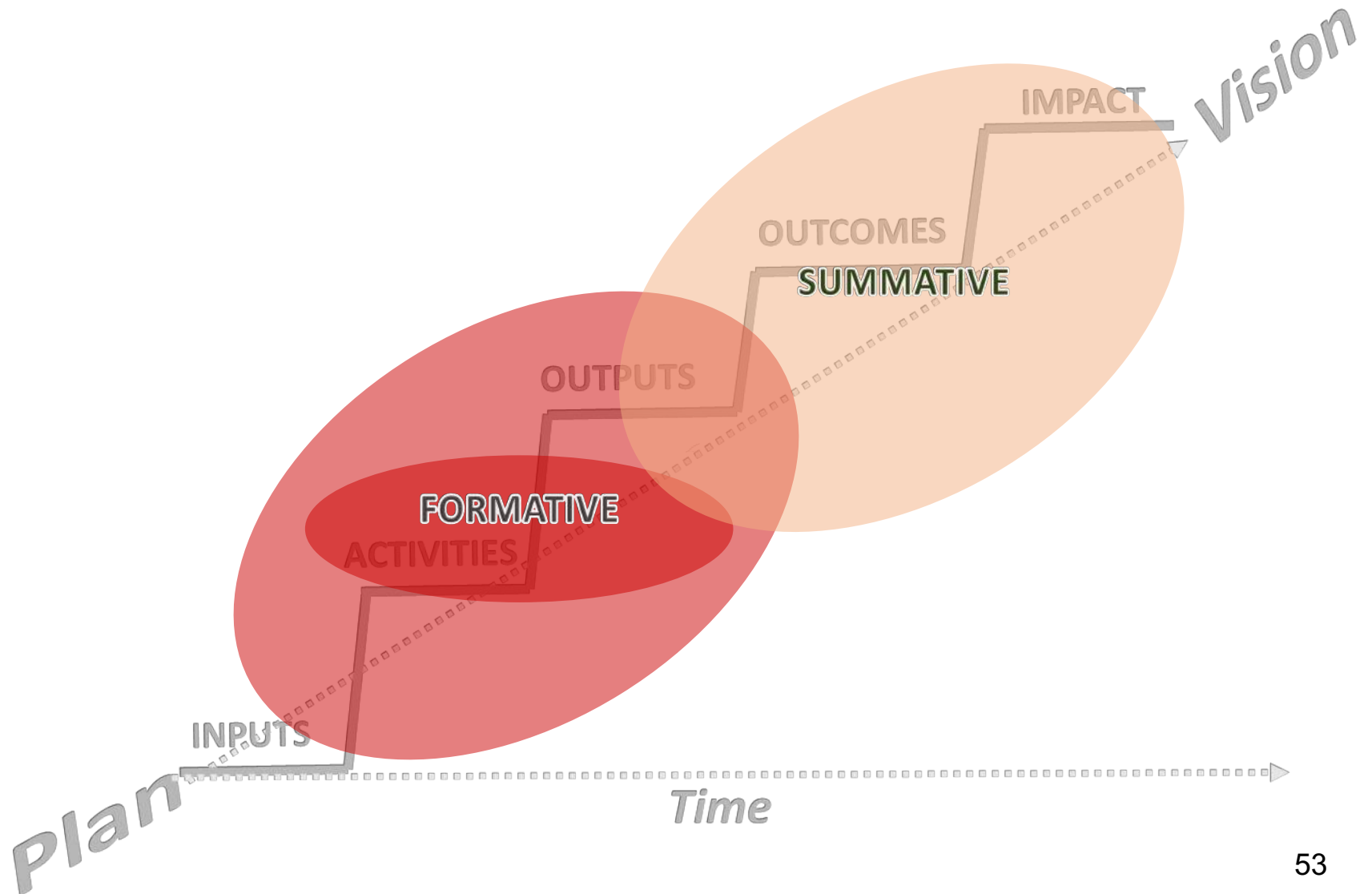
No intention of becoming fixed; identifies effective principles



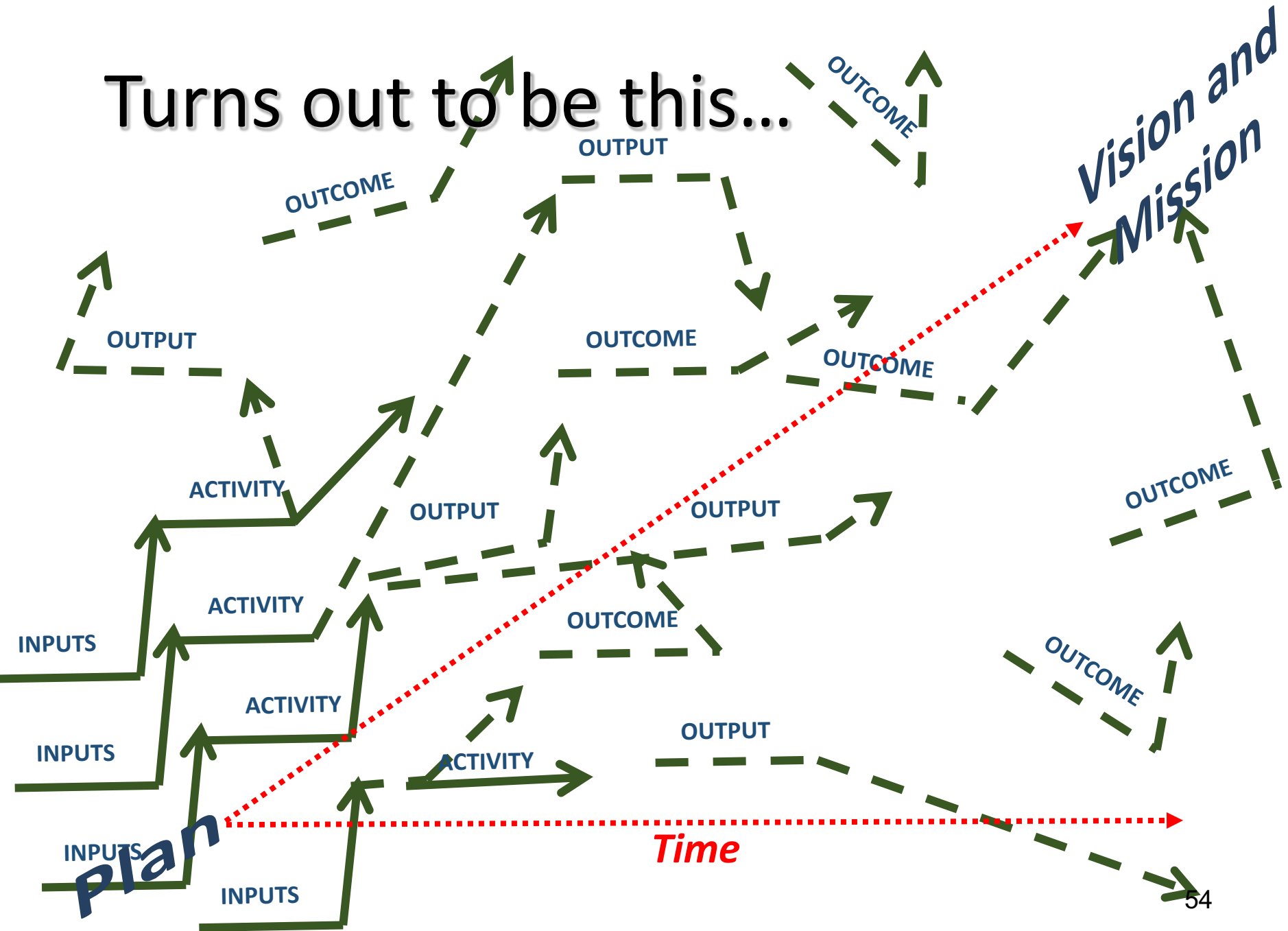
Complex developmental situations are ones in which this...



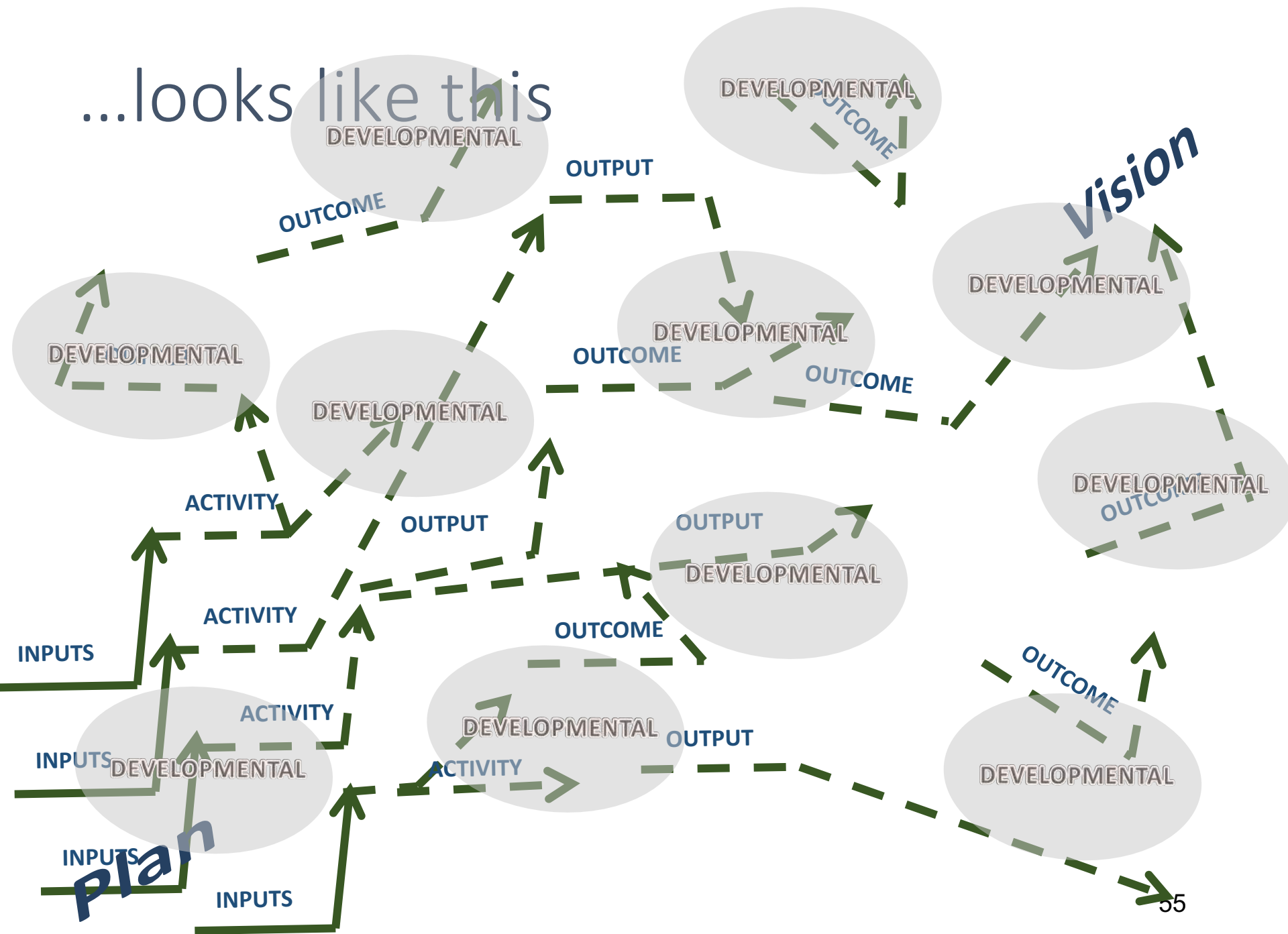
And this...



# Turns out to be this...



...looks like this





# Ongoing development

- Conflict mitigation and peacekeeping
- Community-owned and generated development
- Technological innovations
- New uses of social media
- Climate change mitigation and adaptation
- Aging population initiatives
- Youth engagement
- Leadership development



# Uncertainty and Emergence

*“No battle plan ever survives contact with the enemy.”*

Field Marshall Helmuth  
Carl Bernard von Moltke

*“Everyone has a plan...until he gets hit.”*

Former World Heavyweight  
boxing champion, Mike Tyson

Tom Peters (1996) *Liberation Management* :

*“READY. FIRE. AIM.”*

# Purposes

## Purpose

## Challenge

## Implications

**2** Adapting effective principles to new contexts

Innovative initiatives:  
Develop 'their own' version

Knowledge disseminated;  
sensitivity to context,  
capabilities & priorities

# Evidence-based Practice

Evaluation grew up in the “projects” testing models under a theory of change that pilot testing would lead to proven models that could be disseminated and taken to scale:

**The search for *best practices***  
**and *evidenced-based practices***

# Fundamental Issue: How the World Is Changed

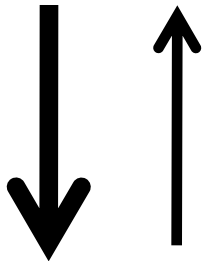
**Top-down scaling of  
“proven models” with**

***Fidelity Evaluation***

versus

**Bottoms-up adaptive management  
and**

***Developmental Evaluation***



# Models vs. Principles

Identifying proven principles for  
adaptive management  
(bottoms-up approach)

*versus*

Identifying and disseminating  
proven models  
(top down approach)



# Vibrant communities, Canada

In April 2002, fifteen communities and the three national sponsors met for a three day forum in Guelph, Ontario to create Vibrant Communities. They jointly developed an experiment designed to test a “new” way to tackle poverty in a way that acknowledged the complex nature of poverty and the challenge of achieving scale in poverty reduction efforts. The new way was not a model, but rather a set of five core principles that local communities agreed to follow in mounting locally unique campaigns:


Each community was represented by someone from the private, public and non-profit sector, as well as someone with experience living in poverty.

# Principles

1. **Poverty Reduction** – a focus on reducing poverty as opposed to alleviating the hardships of living in poverty
2. **Comprehensive Thinking & Action** – addressing the inter-related causes of poverty rather than its individual symptoms
3. **Multisectoral Collaboration** – engaging individuals and organizations from at least four key sectors – business, government, non-profit and persons who've experienced poverty – in a joint effort rather than one sector
4. **Community Asset-Building** – building on community strengths rather than focusing on its deficits
5. **Learning & Change** – embracing a long term process of learning and change rather than simply undertaking a series of specific interventions

# INSPIRED LEARNING

An Evaluation of Vibrant Communities' National Supports

 2002 – 2012



# *CONTEXTUAL SCALING*

- Options by context
- Principles-based adaptation
- Document and assess adaptation

versus

HIGH FIDELITY REPLICATION

# Purposes

## Purpose

## Challenge

## Implications

**3** Major cross-scale developmental evaluation

Disrupt existing system; scale & systems change add levels of complexity

Adaptive cross-scale innovations assume complex dynamics: agility, responsiveness



# Māori

## *He Oranga Poutama Initiative*





# Māori Health Initiative Example

The story of *He Oranga Poutama*, evaluators Kate McKegg and Nan Wehipeihana



**TO Māori**

**WITH Māori**

**AS Māori**

- DE book, pages 274-279

# Overarching Principle

Engage in health and recreation  
AS Māori

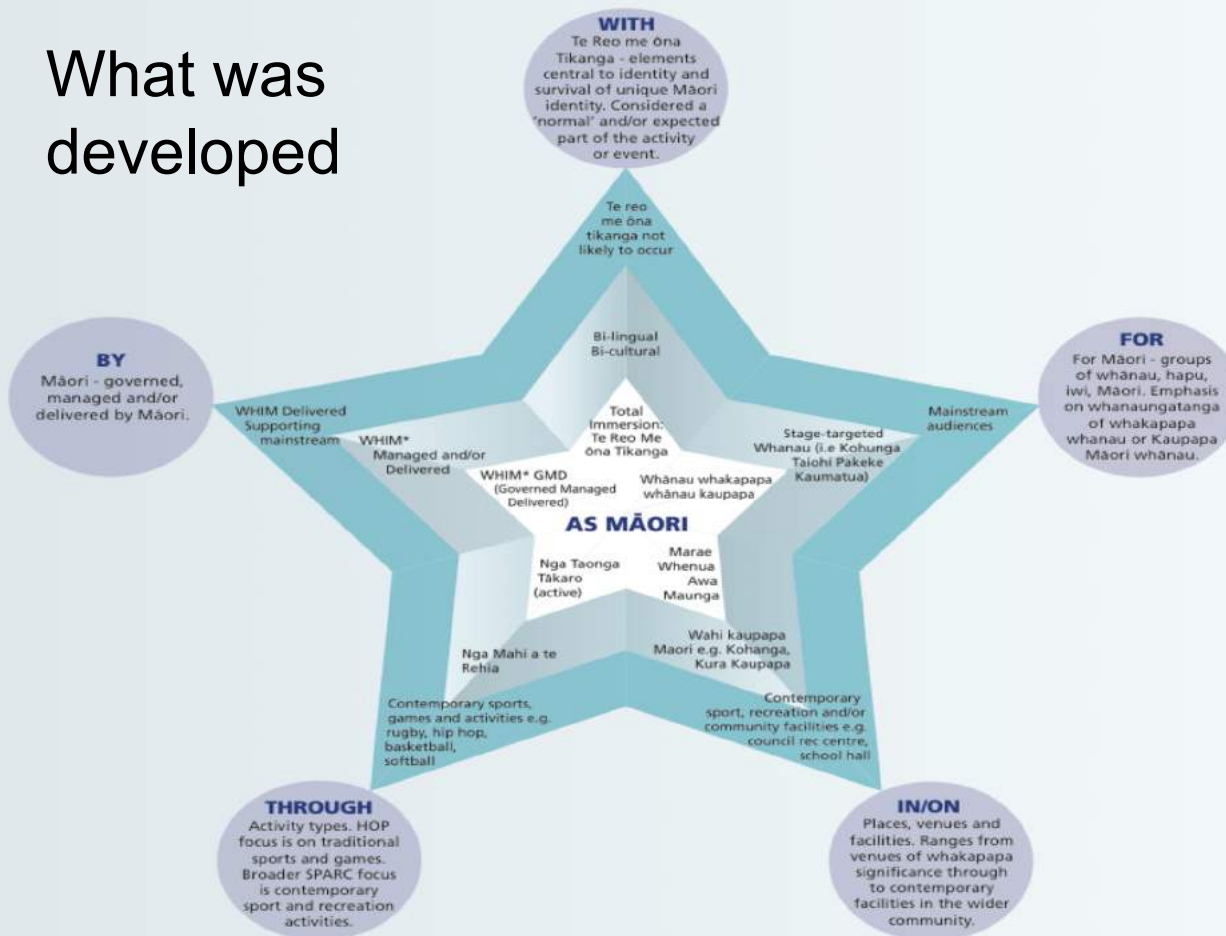
# He Oranga Poutama Developmental Evaluation



HOP initiative set out to develop a practical, grounded understanding of what *as Māori* looks like in diverse activities.

Core principles were developed and adapted in various local settings along with a system of national coordination and support to facilitate local effort.

## What was developed



\* WHIM: Whānau, Hapu, Iwi, Māori \* GMD: Governed, Managed, Delivered

- This 'Whetu' outlines a five-criteria continuum to help determine 'as Māori' participation for the context of the He Oranga Poutama initiative.
- The closer an activity maps to the criteria in the inner star, closest to the 'As Māori' centre, the more likely it is to contribute to HOP's goal of participating as 'Māori' in sport and recreation.
- Generally three dimensions of the inner star are required for a strong HOP goal connection.
- Dimensions of the outer star are strongly aligned to participation in sport and recreation by Māori in mainstream initiatives or events.



# AES Best Evaluation Policy and Systems Award

2013 Award Winners: Nan Wehipeihana, Kate McKegg and Kataraina Pipi of Research Evaluation Consultancy Limited (a member of the Kinnect Group), and Veronica Thompson from Sport New Zealand) for Developmental Evaluation – *He Oranga Poutama*: what have we learned?



# Harvard Center for the Child



# FOI consists of three primary components:

- **Science** that provides a continuous pipeline of discoveries and hypotheses (from the biological, behavioral, and social disciplines) that are communicated effectively for application in policy and practice.
- **Intervention Strategies** that are designed, tested, and refined through the **IDEAS Impact Framework**<sup>TM</sup>. They include small-scale pilots as well as strategies for increasing the population impacts of large-scale, evidence-based interventions.
- A **Learning Community** that includes people and organizations united by a common vision, engaged in shared learning to accelerate innovation, promoting early adoption of promising strategies, and testing pathways to impact at scale.





## Three PURPOSES

- ❖ Guide ongoing adaptation
- ❖ Adapting to new contexts (scaling principles)
- ❖ Systems change and transformation

# 9

evidence-based,  
guiding principles  
to help youth  
overcome  
homelessness

February 2014

Developed by the Homeless Youth Collaborative on Developmental Evaluation  
Technical Assistance by Michael Quinn Patton, PhD and Nora F. Murphy, PhD  
Supported by the Otto Bremer Foundation

- Three emergency shelters
- Two drop-in centers
- One street outreach collaborative
- Two counties in the Twin Cities metro



# Principles-focused evaluation

1. Identified principles in draft form
2. Collaboratively identified fourteen youth
3. Interviewed youth, reviewed their case file, interviewed a nominated staff person
4. Synthesized information and wrote case stories
5. Reviewed stories with the youth
6. Analyzed stories, looking for principles and emergent themes

# Trusting Youth-Adult Relationships

True caring by staff is profoundly  
important to youth.

Build relationships by interacting with youth in  
an honest, dependable,  
authentic, caring  
and supportive way

And you be like, “Okay, I have all this on my plate. I have to dig in and look into [the choices I’m making] to make my life more complete.” And I felt that on my own, I really couldn’t. Not even the strongest person on God’s green Earth can do it. I couldn’t do it. So I ended up reaching out to [the youth shelter], and they opened their arms. They were like just, “Come. Just get here,” and they got me back on track.

**-Pearl**

*If I was to sit in a room and think about, like, everything that happened to me or I've been through, I'll get to cryin' and feelin' like I don't wanna be on Earth anymore—like I wanted to die. When I talk to somebody about it, it makes me feel better. The people I talk to about it give me good advice. They tell me how much they like me and how [good] I'm doin'. They just put good stuff in my head, and then I think about it and realize I am a good person and everything's gonna work out better.*

*-Maria*

# How this is different

The opposite of this principle (*trusting adult-youth relationships*) is to;

focus on the transaction (ex: help with GED preparation, help with resume writing, help applying for housing) while minimizing opportunities for relationships to develop.



# Journey Oriented

Interact with youth to help them understand the interconnectedness of past, present and future as they decide where they want to go and how to get there

## The opposite

Immediate outcomes focus:  
housing

# Trauma-Informed

Recognize that most homeless youth have experienced trauma; build relationships, responses, and services on that knowledge

## The opposite

Standards of behavior; compliance with rules

# Non-Judgmental

Interact with youth without labeling or judging them  
on the basis of background, experiences,  
choices or behaviors

# Harm Reduction

Contain the effects of risky behavior in the short-term  
and seek to reduce its effects in the long-term

**The opposite: Zero tolerance**

## PRINCIPLES FOR WORKING WITH HOMELESS YOUTH

1. *Journey oriented.* Interact with youth to help them understand the interconnectedness of past, present, and future as they decide where they want to go and how to get there.
2. *Trauma-informed care.* Recognize that all homeless youth have experienced trauma; build relationships, responses, and services on that knowledge.
3. *Nonjudgmental engagement.* Interact with youth without labeling or judging them on the basis of their background, experiences, choices, or behaviors.
4. *Harm reduction.* Contain the effects of risky behavior in the short term, and seek to reduce its effects in the long term.
5. *Trusting youth–adult relationships.* Build relationships by interacting with youth in an honest, dependable, authentic, caring, and supportive way.
6. *Strengths-based approach.* Start with and build on the skills, strengths, and positive characteristics of each youth.
7. *Positive youth development:* Provide opportunities for youth to build a sense of competency, usefulness, belonging, and power.
8. *Holistic.* Engage youth in a manner that recognizes that mental, physical, spiritual, and social health are interconnected and interrelated.

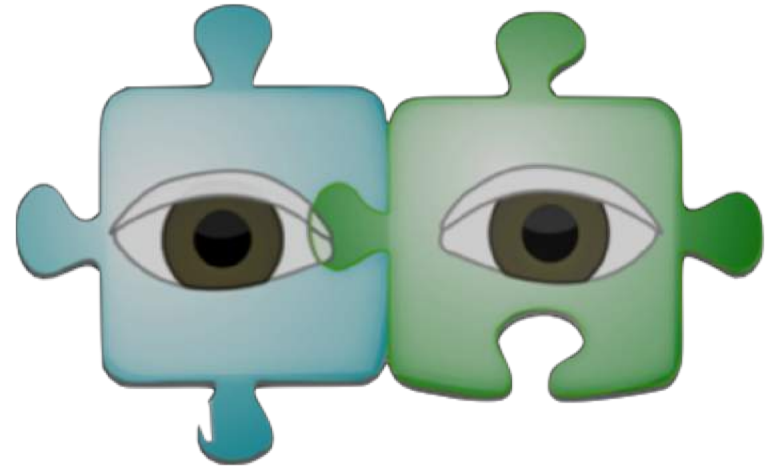
# Three kinds of evidence-based interventions

- **Summative evaluation** of a single program, grant, or model.
- **Meta-analysis** of results for several programs/grants using the same model aiming at the same outcomes.
- **Synthesis of effective principles:** *Diverse interventions adhering to shared evidence-based principles.*



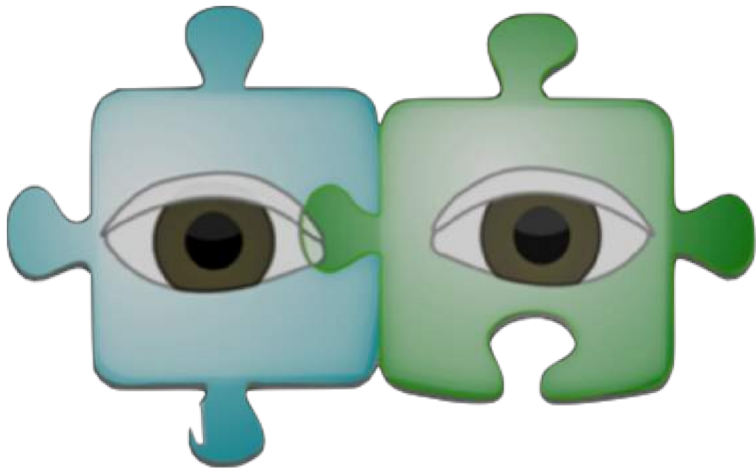
**EXAMPLES**

# *Two-Eyed Seeing*



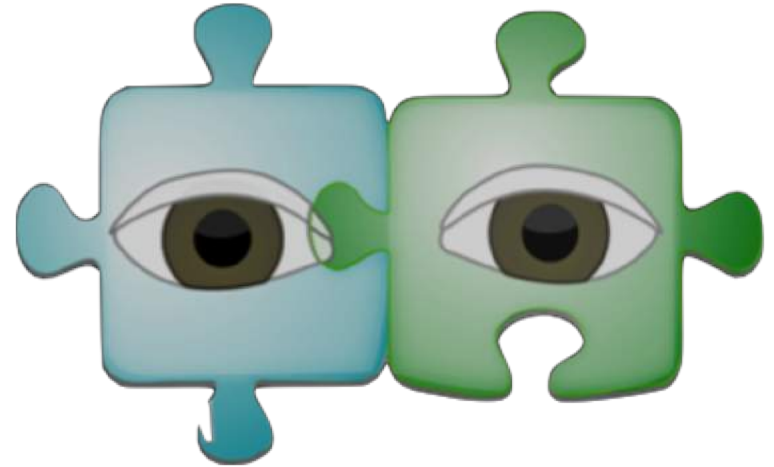
The Guiding Principle  
brought into the  
Integrative Science  
co-learning journey  
by [Mi'kmaw Elder Albert Marshall](#).

*Etuaptmumk* is the Mi'kmaw word for  
Two-Eyed Seeing.



Two-Eyed Seeing refers to learning to see from one eye with the strengths of Indigenous knowledges and ways of knowing, and from the other eye with the strengths of Western knowledges and ways of knowing ... and learning to use both these eyes together, for the benefit of all.

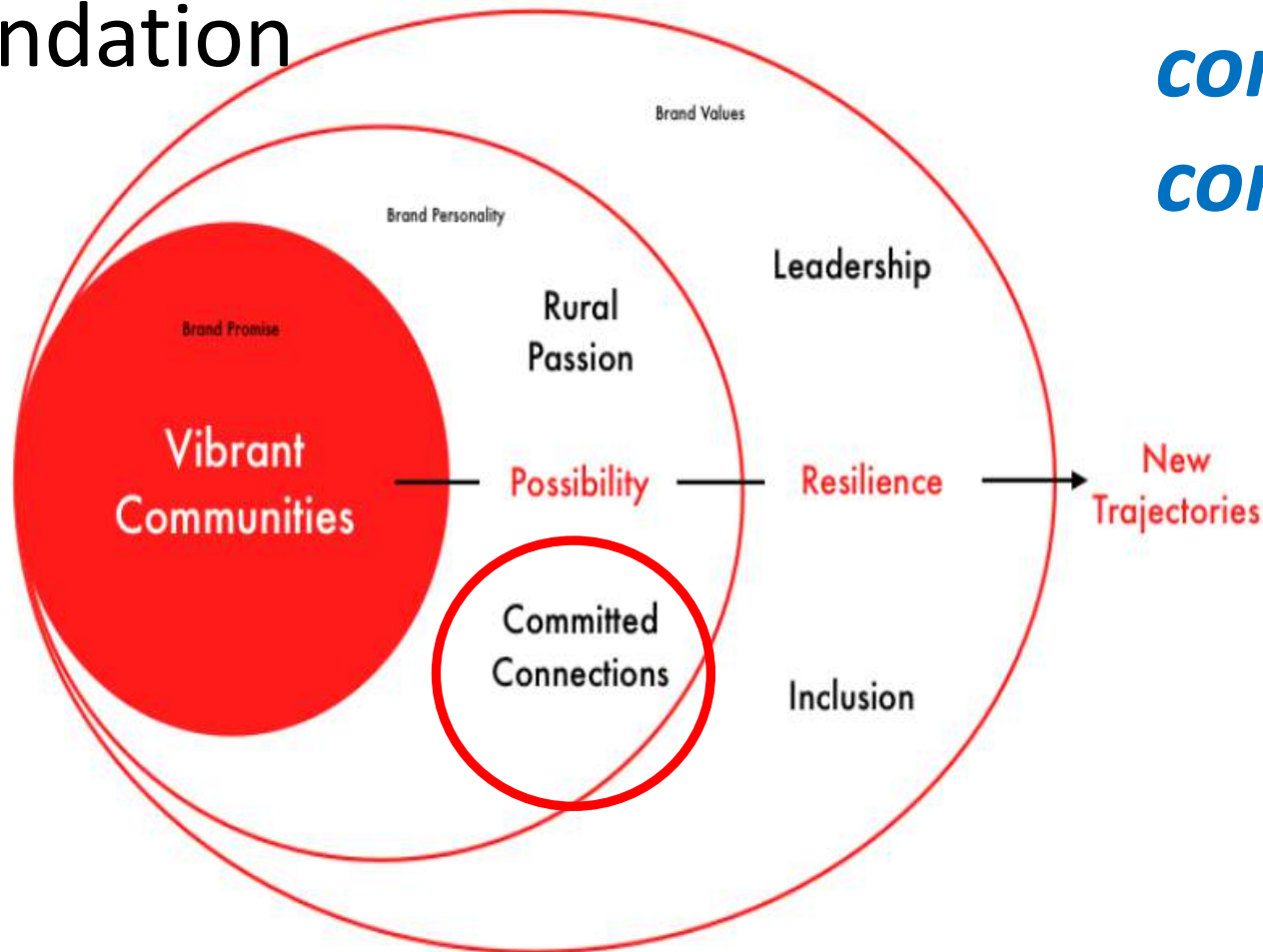




Elder Albert indicates that Two-Eyed Seeing is the gift of multiple perspectives treasured by many Aboriginal peoples. We believe it is the requisite Guiding Principle for the new consciousness needed to enable Integrative Science work, as well as other integrative or transcultural or transdisciplinary or collaborative work.

# Strategic Framework Blandin Foundation

**Principle:**  
*Nurture  
committed  
connections*



Brand Promise - Answers the questions: Who are you? What do you do? & Why does it matter to me?

Brand Personality - Informs the tone and flavor of everything you do and say.

Brand Values - Essential ingredients of your DNA and how you create impact that simply cannot be removed from who you are aspire to be.

# Committed connections insights

Committed connections is BOTH PROCESS and OUTCOMES, and the two are linked

## 7. The internet offers emerging opportunities for *virtual connections*:

- This is an important area for future development and developmental evaluation already underway with the Broadband Initiative and Foundation communications and information systems infrastructure. Inquiry questions going forward include: What are the opportunities for *committed connections* using web platforms? Youth virtual communities? Social media? Connecting former Itasca residents to home area? BCLP alums? How does Blandin continue to stay on top of these new developments and directions?

8. In addition to engaging in deep reflection (developmental evaluation) on our external work, we also conducted reflective practice on how we could get better at connecting with each other as the Senior Leadership Team in order to share learning and better leverage our work. Our focusing question was:

“What is shared learning?”

# Committed connections insights

- We learned that we only know something when we know it together. As a result of this we committed to regular check-ins at SLT meetings to cross-fertilize connections being made and knowledge being gained.
- We asked ourselves what we needed to know together and decided that we needed to watch for trends and themes emerging in common from our separate spheres, and to better capture impacts as they occur. One way to do this is develop some simple processes for “after action reviews.”
- Monitoring these issues together is a core part of strengthening the team’s development.

## The Mountain of Accountability

© Blandin Foundation

Mission  
Fulfillment

### Accountability for Learning, Development and Adaptation

- Deep reflective practice
- Developmental evaluation
- Strategic framework evaluation
- Focus on systems change, innovation & complexity

### Accountability for Impact

- Major program evaluations
- External strategic evaluation
- Board survey & feedback
- Grantee Perception Report
- Synthesis of grantees' reports
- Employee surveys

### Basic Accountability for Management Processes

- Financial audits & investment returns
- Human resource performance management
- Basic management information system
- Due diligence
- Routine grantee reporting
- Community indicators for planning



# **What Brain Sciences Reveal About Integrating Theory and Practice**

**Michael Quinn Patton<sup>1</sup>**

American Journal of Evaluation  
2014, Vol. 35(2) 237-244  
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DOI: 10.1177/1098214013503700  
[aje.sagepub.com](http://aje.sagepub.com)





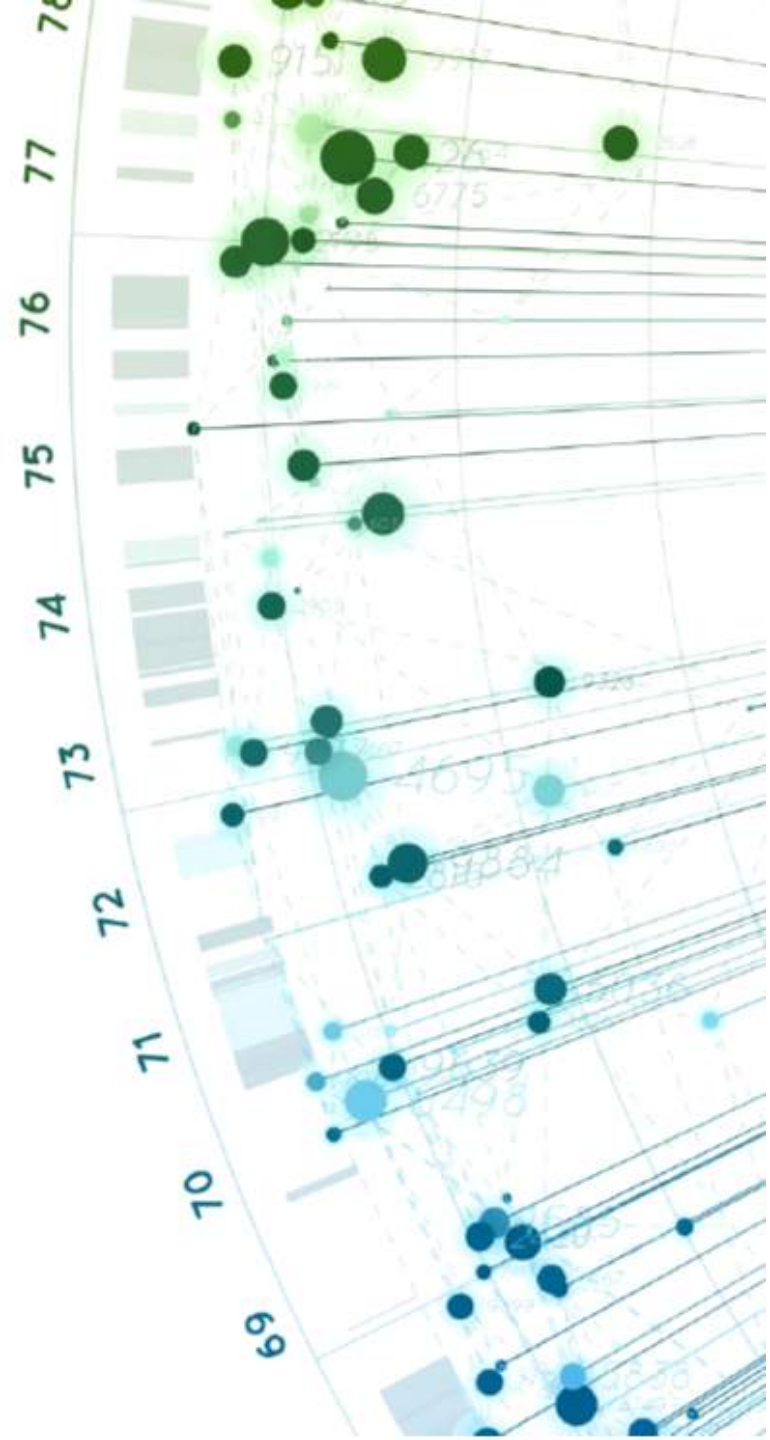
# The Nature of EXPERTISE

# Principles for Effective Use of Systems Thinking in Evaluation

## Systems in Evaluation TIG

A Topical Interest Group of the  
American Evaluation Association

Revised September 9, 2018



## SYSTEMS-IN-EVALUATION PRINCIPLE

View the evaluation situation through the lens of systems thinking.

## INTERRELATIONSHIPS PRINCIPLE

Critically deliberate on, work to examine, understand and to appropriately address interrelationships regarding both the evaluand and the evaluation itself.

## PERSPECTIVES PRINCIPLE

Capture, critically deliberate on, work to understand, represent, and appropriately address diverse perspectives.

## BOUNDARIES PRINCIPLE

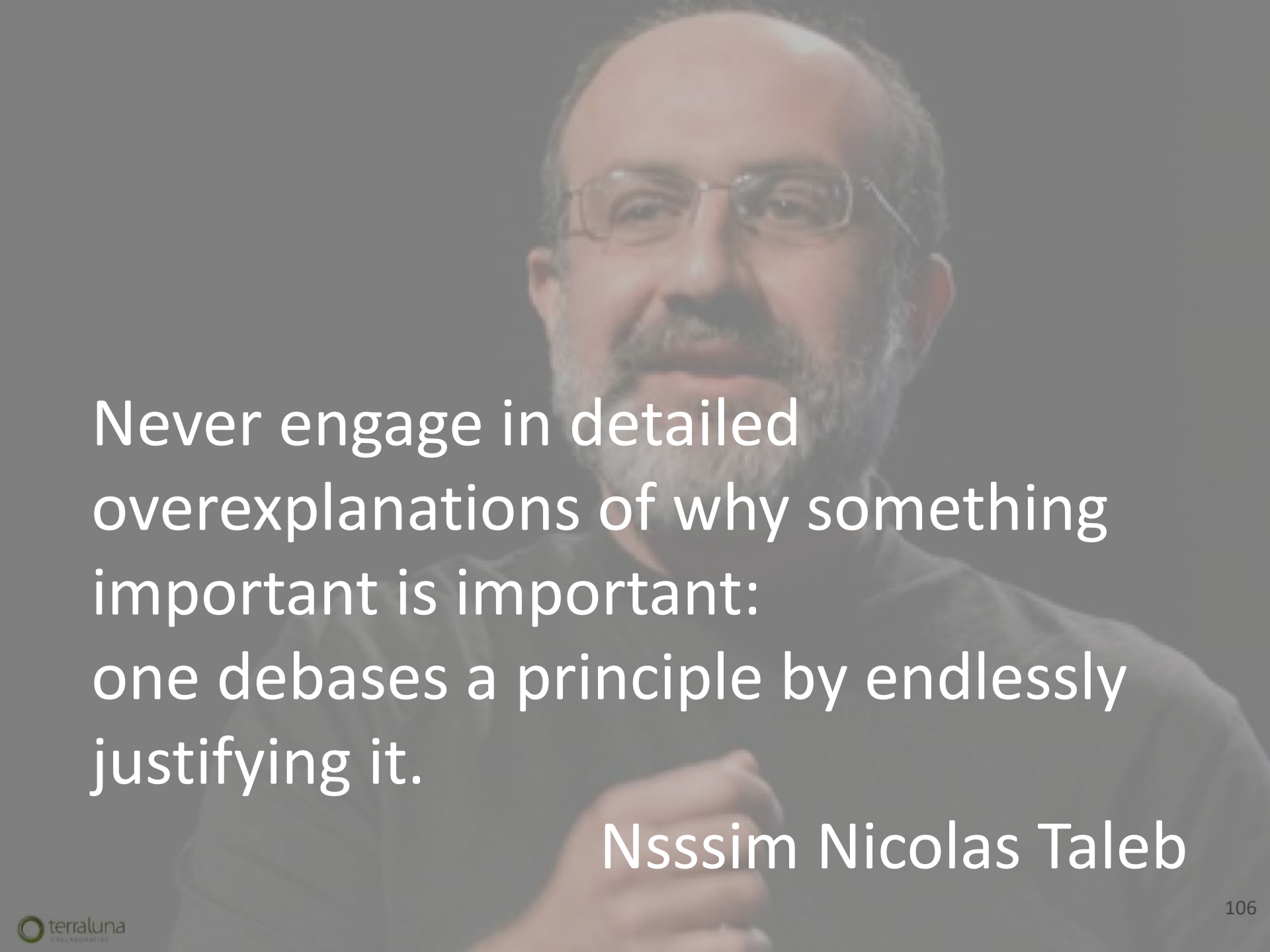
Critically deliberate on, set, and explain the boundaries and boundary decisions that relate to the situation being evaluated and the evaluation itself.

## DYNAMICS PRINCIPLE

Focus on the patterns of change that emerge within the system to understand their influence and significance for the evaluation.

# Systems Principles and Fishing

- **Boundary questions:** *What kind of fishing do you like to do? Where do you fish? What do you fish for? What do you do with the fish you catch?*
- **Perspectives questions:** *Why do you fish? What are some of the different reasons that people fish? (To eat, for recreation – catch-and-release; to be outdoors and commune with nature; to spend time with family and friends; because it's fun). Do you know people who don't like fishing? (Some find it boring, time-consuming, boring, difficult, boring, expensive to buy equipment, boring.)*
- **Interrelationships questions:** *Who do you fish with? How does fishing fit into the rest of your life? How do you talk about fishing with other people? How important is fishing to you compared to other things that are important to you?*
- **Dynamics questions:** *How have you seen fishing change in recent years, if at all? How has your fishing experience changed over time? How will fishing in Minnesota be affected by climate change, population pressures, tourism, state environmental regulations, more severe weather patterns? (Not-so-fun-fact: The most popular and official state fish is the Walleye which is very sensitive to temperature changes and is threatened by global warming in Minnesota.)*
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A background image of Nassim Nicholas Taleb, a man with a grey beard and glasses, wearing a dark shirt. The image is semi-transparent, allowing the text to be overlaid.

Never engage in detailed  
overexplanations of why something  
important is important:  
one debases a principle by endlessly  
justifying it.

Nassim Nicholas Taleb

**5. How can working with Principle focused evaluation contribute to the vision of Blue Marble Evaluators? And how can we contribute as Danish internal and external evaluators?**



Global Systems Change ...



**BLUE MARBLE  
EVALUATION**



# Principles- Focused Evaluation

The GUIDE



Michael Quinn Patton